

Scientific Paper:

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Pearl Mussel Conservation and Stream Restoration

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Abstract:

Some of the most important populations of the freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) have survived together with small numbers of the common river mussel (*Unio crassus*). Both mussel populations are declining. There are cross-national (Germany / Czech Republic) efforts aiming to achieve the rejuvenation of the populations by improvement of the habitat quality and specific measures for species conservation, including the rearing of juveniles.

The workshop on Pearl Mussel Conservation and Stream Restoration focused on

- the exchange of experience: We wanted to learn about the work of other projects and scientific groups in the fields of stream restoration in general and the rearing and conservation of freshwater pearl mussels in particular.
- evaluation: We wanted to discuss the results of the restoration and conservation work done by the inviting projects with colleagues and specialists.

In the case of the freshwater pearl mussel, stream restoration mainly aims to improve the water quality and the river sediments. Especially the young mussels need a clean and well-oxygenated sediment. Thus the sustainable reduction of the loading of the sediment with silt is one main goal of habitat restoration.

Most experience with river sediments and river restoration in general is gained outside the small number of projects for the conservation of freshwater mussels. Therefore we invited contributions from scientists working on related fields, e.g. the habitat and conservation of salmon.